

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested.

The Examiner's comments indicate that she has only considered and made of record those references that happened to be cited on the Form PTO 892 attached to the outstanding Office Action. However, the Examiner's attention is respectfully drawn to applicant's IDS filed May 11, 2005 which not only cites the Jebara et al. article but also five US patent documents as well as five foreign patent documents.

A copy of this May 11, 2005 IDS is attached with its associated Form PTO-1449 and another copy of the cited foreign patent documents. As will be apparent from the attached hand-corrected copy of these documents, this IDS was improperly captioned because the serial number was recited as "10/552,024" instead of the correct "10/522,024". It is hoped that no IDS fee will be required under these circumstances. However, if such fee is required, then authority is hereby given to charge it to our Account No. 14-1140. Official consideration and citation of these references is requested.

In response to the Examiner's formality-based objection to hyperlinks in the specification, the hyperlinks have been removed by the above amendment. In addition, the entire application has been reviewed and amended so as to place it in more traditional US format.

Accordingly, all outstanding formal issues are now believed to have been resolved in the applicant's favor.

The rejection of claims 1, 7, 8 and 14 under 35 U.S.C. §103 as allegedly being made "obvious" based on Jebara in view of Suomela '830 is respectfully traversed.

Jebara describes what is apparently a continuous monitoring of conversation during a group discussion (i.e., speech exchanged between plural persons) using a speech recognition computer that acts as a mediator for the group meeting, offering feedback and relevant questions to stimulate further conversation.

As explained in applicant's specification (page 6, lines 15-34), such a system requires a dedicated speech recognizer to listen to the entire conversation between plural people. Accordingly, if one were to attempt adapting the Jebara system straightforwardly into a call center scenario where potentially dozens of independent conversations are simultaneously ongoing, such a system would require a separate speech recognizer resource for each conversation. That is, there would be a required separate instantiation of a speech recognizer application required for each agent station in the call center. This would cause many disadvantages, some of which are noted in applicant's introductory "background" section of the specification.

As the Examiner has correctly recognized, Jebara does not teach or suggest any speech recognition control means arranged to activate or deactivate the speech recognition means in response to one or more predetermined criteria. Indeed, such would appear contrary to the teaching of Jebara since Jebara seeks to mediate the entirety of a discussion taking place in a group meeting by offering feedback and relevant questions to stimulate further conversation, etc.

To supply this admitted deficiency of Jebara, the Examiner relies upon Suomela '830 because it teaches activating and deactivating speech recognition hardware/software in response to predetermined criteria. The Examiner relies upon paragraphs 9 and 12 for this teaching.

However, Suomela is actually teaching the use of speech recognition hardware/software for the purpose of achieving voice activation control -- by a single person -- over a terminal (e.g., a cell phone or the like). In this context, the speech recognition feature is not always activated. Instead, when it is desired to use voice recognition features as a primary input control (e.g., when the device terminal is initially turned on or when the human seeks to use the telephone by depressing some "menu" button that indicates the phone is being used -- see paragraph 13), the speech recognition feature is activated. The activation appears to be automatically taken at the very beginning of any telephone-mode usage (e.g., when voice activation control would be desired -- typically only during call set-up processes and not during any ongoing telephone voice conversation mode).

In any event, neither Jebara nor Suomela offer any teaching or suggestion of a purposeful time delay after the initiation of a telephone call voice conversation and before the activation of a speech recognition feature. Indeed, neither of these references actually teach the monitoring of telephone voice conversation signals carried on a telephone communications channel between a user and another person, etc. As noted by the applicant, there are advantages in the applicant's unique call center context (an information interface system using speech recognition for listening to telephone voice conversation signals carried on a telephone communications channel, etc.) to waiting some time during a conversation before activating the voice recognition features for a given agent at the call center. It is only during an ongoing exchange of voice signals on the communications channel, after communications channel has been carrying voice signals related to those later to be monitored, that the applicant's control means then activates the speech recognition means in response to one or more predetermined criteria (e.g., elapsed time).

As already noted, there is no teaching, motivation or suggestion for modifying Jebara's group discussion mediator with the single user's voice actuation command features of Suomela '830. Furthermore, even if such disparate teachings are combined *arguendo*, they would still not teach or suggest the applicant's claimed invention -- especially as now clarified by the above amendments to independent claims 1 and 8.

Given such fundamental deficiencies of both these references with respect to the features already noted at independent claims 1 and 8, it is not believed necessary at this time to discuss further deficiencies of this allegedly "obvious" combination of references with respect to other features of the rejected claims.

The rejection of claims 2-6 and 9-13 under 35 U.S.C. §103 as allegedly being made "obvious" based on Jebara/Suomela in further view of Rhodes is also respectfully traversed.

Fundamental deficiencies of Jebara/Suomela have already been noted above with respect to parent claims 1 and 8. Rhodes does not supply such deficiencies.

Accordingly, it is not believed necessary at this time to discuss further deficiencies of this allegedly "obvious" three-way combination of prior art teachings.

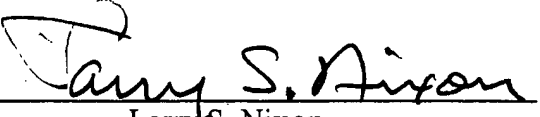
Accordingly, this entire application is now believed to be in allowable condition and a formal Notice to that effect is respectfully solicited.

SCAHILL ²
Appl. No. 10/5~~6~~2,024
February 25, 2008

Respectfully submitted,

NIXON & VANDERHYE P.C.

By:


Larry S. Nixon
Reg. No. 25,640

LSN:vc
901 North Glebe Road, 11th Floor
Arlington, VA 22203-1808
Telephone: (703) 816-4000
Facsimile: (703) 816-4100